

Today, Rep. Bruce Braley (D-Iowa) presented the final House Oversight Committee report on the denial of full GI Bill benefits to members of Iowa National Guard's 1st Battalion, 133rd Infantry to members of the Iowa National Guard in Waterloo.

Washington, DC - Today, Rep. Bruce Braley (D-Iowa) presented the final House Oversight Committee report on the denial of full GI Bill benefits to members of Iowa National Guard's 1st Battalion, 133rd Infantry to members of the Iowa National Guard in Waterloo.

Approximately 600 members of the 1-133rd were affected by an Army error last year that disqualified them from receiving GI Bill education benefits. Rep. Braley worked with other Members of Congress and the Army to correct this error and qualify these members of the 1-133rd for full GI Bill benefits. Last October, Braley launched a Congressional investigation into the error.

"I'm happy that every 1-133rd member who was initially denied GI Bill education benefits because of the Army error can now draw full benefits, and I'm even happier that 100 of these vets are using their full benefits to further their education," Braley said.

"As this report indicates, the laws governing our Guard and Reserve soldiers do not always provide them with the benefits they earn. I will continue fighting to ensure that the National Guard receive the support and benefits they deserve."

Last August, nearly 600 members of the 1-133rd returned from a 17 month tour of duty in Iraq-the longest continual deployment of any ground combat unit in Iraq. Many of the troops learned they didn't qualify for GI Bill benefits because an Army error in the wording of their orders left them one to five days short of a 730 day qualification threshold.

After the error came to light and amid pressure from Braley, the Army initiated a process to correct the orders so that affected Guard members could qualify for the benefits they earned.

A copy of the House Oversight Committee report examining the denial of benefits is attached.

TIMELINE: □ Congressman Braley: Fighting for Iowa National Guard's 1-133rd

- August 2005 1-133rd is mobilized by the Army for service in Iraq
- October 2005 1-133rd leaves Iowa for training and Iraq service
- January 2007 1-133rd learns its deployment to Iraq will be extended by an additional 125 days.
- August 2007 1-133rd returns from active duty service in Iraq to Waterloo
- August 2007 Iowa National Guard learns that the orders of hundreds of 1-133rd members who served in Iraq were written one to five days too short for them to qualify for GI Bill benefits
- August 2007 Rep. Braley's office begins dialogue with the Iowa National Guard about the error.
- October 10, 2007 Rep. Braley sends a letter to Army Secretary Peter Geren asking for details on the Army's process to correct the Army error leading to the denial of benefits
- October 17, 2007 Braley co-sponsors legislation introduced by Rep. Tim Walz of Minnesota that would eliminate requirement for soldiers to serve 730 days of active duty service for them to qualify for GI bill benefits

October 18, 2007 Braley requests that the House Oversight Committee launch a formal investigation into the Army error leading to the denial of GI Bill benefits to the 1-133rd.

October 23, 2007 Braley and the House Oversight Committee launch formal investigation into Army's denial of benefits to the 1-133rd

October 31, 2007 Braley Investigation requests hundreds of documents from Army and Department of Defense

February 8, 2008 Braley meets with Pentagon officials regarding denial of GI Bill benefits

February 28, 2008 Braley Investigation requests additional documents from Army and Department of Defense

March 2008 Braley informed that all members of the 1-133rd affected by an Army error disqualifying them from receiving GI Bill education benefits had effort fixed and qualify for full GI Bill benefits

August 20, 2008 Braley presents final Braley Investigation Oversight Committee report to Iowa National Guard